

(c)(1) of this section, the Regional Administrator may, through rulemaking consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act, increase the yellowtail flounder bycatch TAC allocated to vessels participating in the Sea Scallop Area Access Program above 10 percent, provided that such increase will not result in exceeding the total GB yellowtail flounder TAC specified in § 648.85(a)(2).

(3) *Possession restriction and closure when yellowtail flounder TAC has been harvested.* (i) If the Regional Administrator determines that the GB yellowtail flounder TAC specified for the U.S./Canada Management Area under paragraph (a)(2) of this section has been harvested or is projected to be harvested, and notification has been published in the FEDERAL REGISTER, pursuant to paragraph (a)(3)(iv)(C)(3) of this section, but the yellowtail flounder bycatch TAC allocation for the GB stock specified under paragraph (c)(1)(ii) of this section has not been harvested, scallop vessels may continue to fish in the Sea Scallop Area Access Program, but may not retain or land yellowtail flounder, until the yellowtail flounder bycatch TAC is caught, as specified in paragraph (c)(3)(ii) of this section. All catch of yellowtail flounder must continue to be reported by scallop vessels fishing in Access Areas as required under § 648.60.

(ii) If the Regional Administrator determines that the yellowtail flounder bycatch TAC allocation specified under paragraph (c)(1)(i) or (c)(1)(ii) of this section has been, or is projected to be harvested, scallop vessels may not fish within the applicable Access Area for the remainder of the fishing year. The Regional Administrator shall publish notification in the FEDERAL REGISTER, in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, to notify vessels that they may no longer fish within the applicable Access Area for the remainder of the fishing year.

(d) *Haddock incidental catch allowance for some Atlantic herring vessels.* The haddock incidental catch allowance for a vessel issued a Federal Atlantic herring permit and fishing with midwater trawl gear in Management Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3, as defined in § 648.200(f)(1) and (3), is 1 percent of each of the ABCs

for GOM haddock and GB haddock (U.S. catch only) specified according to § 648.90(a)(4) for a particular NE multispecies fishing year. Such haddock catch will be determined as specified in § 648.86(a)(3)(ii).

(e) *Authorized gear performance standards.* Unless otherwise restricted in this part, in areas and times when a special management program, as specified in this section, requires the use of gear authorized by that program to reduce catches of stocks of concern, participating vessels are restricted to the following trip limits: 500 lb (227 kg) of all flatfish species (American plaice, witch flounder, winter flounder, windowpane flounder, and GB yellowtail flounder), combined; 500 lb (227 kg) of monkfish (whole weight); 500 lb (227 kg) of skates (whole weight); and zero possession of lobsters, unless otherwise restricted by § 648.94(b)(3).

[69 FR 22975, Apr. 27, 2004]

EDITORIAL NOTE: For FEDERAL REGISTER citations affecting § 648.85, see the List of CFR Sections Affected, which appears in the Finding Aids section of the printed volume and at www.fdsys.gov.

§ 648.86 NE Multispecies possession restrictions.

Except as provided in § 648.17 or elsewhere in this part, the following possession restrictions apply:

(a) *Haddock*—(1) *NE multispecies common pool vessels.* Haddock possession restrictions for such vessels may be implemented through Regional Administrator authority, as specified in paragraph (r) of this section.

(2) *Scallop dredge vessels.* (i) No person owning or operating a scallop dredge vessel issued a NE multispecies permit may land haddock from, or possess haddock on board, a scallop dredge vessel from January 1 through June 30.

(ii) No person owning or operating a scallop dredge vessel without an NE multispecies permit may possess haddock in, or harvested from, the EEZ from January 1 through June 30.

(iii) Unless otherwise authorized by the Regional Administrator as specified in paragraph (f) of this section, scallop dredge vessels or persons owning or operating a scallop dredge vessel

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that is fishing under a scallop DAS allocated under § 648.53 may land or possess on board up to 300 lb (136.1 kg) of haddock, except as specified in § 648.88(c), provided that the vessel has at least one standard tote on board. This restriction does not apply to vessels also issued limited access NE multispecies permits that are fishing under a multispecies DAS. Haddock on board a vessel subject to this possession limit must be separated from other species of fish and stored so as to be readily available for inspection.

(3)(i) *Incidental catch allowance for some Atlantic herring vessels.* A vessel issued an All Areas Limited Access Herring Permit and/or an Areas 2 and 3 Limited Access Herring Permit fishing on a declared herring trip, regardless of gear or area fished, or a vessel issued a Limited Access Incidental Catch Herring Permit and/or an Open Access Herring Permit and fishing with midwater trawl gear pursuant to § 648.80(d), may only possess and land haddock, in accordance with requirements specified in § 648.80(d) and (e).

(ii) *Haddock incidental catch cap.* (A)(1) When the Regional Administrator has determined that the incidental catch allowance for a given haddock stock as specified in § 648.85(d), has been caught, no vessel issued an Atlantic herring permit and fishing with midwater trawl gear in the applicable stock area, i.e., the Herring GOM Haddock Accountability Measure (AM) Area or Herring GB Haddock AM Area, as defined in paragraphs (a)(3)(ii)(A)(2) and (3) of this section, may fish for, possess, or land herring in excess of 2,000 lb (907.2 kg) per trip in or from that area, unless all herring possessed and landed by the vessel were caught outside the applicable AM Area and the vessel complies with the gear stowage provisions specified in § 648.23(b) while transiting the AM Area. Upon this determination, the haddock possession limit is reduced to 0 lb (0 kg) for a vessel issued a Federal Atlantic herring permit and fishing with midwater trawl gear or for a vessel issued an All Areas Limited Access Herring Permit and/or an Areas 2 and 3 Limited Access Herring Permit fishing on a declared herring trip, regardless of area fished or gear used, in the applicable AM

area, unless the vessel also possesses a NE. multispecies permit and is operating on a declared (consistent with § 648.10(g)) NE. multispecies trip. In making this determination, the Regional Administrator shall use haddock catches observed by NMFS-approved observers by herring vessel trips using midwater trawl gear in Management Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3, as defined in § 648.200(f)(1) and (3), expanded to an estimate of total haddock catch for all such trips in a given haddock stock area.

(2) *Herring GOM Haddock Accountability Measure Area.* The Herring GOM Haddock AM Area is defined by the straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated (copies of a map depicting the area are available from the Regional Administrator upon request):

HERRING GOM HADDOCK ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURE AREA

Point	N. latitude	W. longitude
HGA1	(¹)	69°20'
HGA	43°40'	69°20'
HGA3	43°40'	69°00'
HGA4	43°20'	69°00'
HGA5	43°20'	(²)
HGA6	42°20'	(³)
HGA7	42°20'	70°00'
HGA8	(⁴)	70°00'

¹ The intersection of the Maine coastline and 69°20' W. long.

² The intersection of the U.S./Canada maritime boundary and 43°20' N. lat.

³ The intersection of the U.S./Canada maritime boundary and 42°20' N. lat.

⁴ The intersection of the north-facing shoreline of Cape Cod, MA, and 70°00' W. long.

(3) *The Herring GB Haddock Accountability Measure Area.* The Herring GB Haddock AM Area is defined by the straight lines connecting the following points in the order stated (copies of a map depicting the area are available from the Regional Administrator upon request):

HERRING GOM HADDOCK ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURE AREA

Point	N. latitude	W. longitude
HBA1	42°20'	70°00'
HBA2	42°20'	(¹)
HBA3	40°30'	(¹)
HBA4	40°30'	66°40'
HBA5	39°50'	66°40'
HBA6	39°50'	68°50'
HBA7	(²)	68°50'
HBA8	41°00'	(³)
HBA9	41°00'	69°30'

HERRING GOM HADDOCK ACCOUNTABILITY
MEASURE AREA—Continued

Point	N. latitude	W. longitude
HBA10	41°10'	69°30'
HBA11	41°10'	69°50'
HBA12	41°20'	69°50'
HBA13	41°20'	(⁴)
HBA14	(⁵)	70°00'
HBA15	(⁶)	70°00'
HBA16	(⁷)	70°00'

¹ The intersection of the U.S./Canada maritime boundary.

² The intersection of the boundary of Closed Area I and 68°50' W. long.

³ The intersection of the boundary of Closed Area I and 41°00' N. lat.

⁴ The intersection of the east-facing shoreline of Nantucket, MA, and 41°20' N. lat.

⁵ The intersection of the north-facing shoreline of Nantucket, MA, and 70°00' W. long.

⁶ The intersection of the south-facing shoreline of Cape Cod, MA, and 70°00' W. long.

⁷ The intersection of the north-facing shoreline of Cape Cod, MA, and 70°00' W. long.

(4) The haddock incidental catch caps specified are for the NE multispecies fishing year (May 1–April 30), which differs from the herring fishing year (January 1–December 31). If the haddock incidental catch allowance is attained by the herring midwater trawl fishery for the GOM or GB, as specified in § 648.85(d), the 2,000-lb (907.2-kg) limit on herring possession in the applicable AM Area, as described in paragraph (a)(3)(ii)(A)(2) or (3) of this section, shall be in effect until the end of the NE multispecies fishing year. For example, the 2011 haddock incidental catch cap is specified for the period May 1, 2011–April 30, 2012, and the 2012 haddock catch cap would be specified for the period May 1, 2012–April 30, 2013. If the catch of haddock by herring midwater trawl vessels reached the 2011 incidental catch cap at any time prior to the end of the NE multispecies fishing year (April 30, 2012), the 2,000-lb (907.2-kg) limit on possession of herring in the applicable AM Area would extend through April 30, 2012. Beginning May 1, 2012, the 2012 catch cap would go into effect.

(B) [Reserved]

(b) *Cod*—(1) *GOM cod landing limit*. Except as provided in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, or unless otherwise restricted under § 648.85, a vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS permit, including a vessel issued a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions, may land up to 800 lb (362.9 kg) of cod for each DAS, or part of a

DAS, up to 4,000 lb (1,818.2 kg) per trip. Cod on board a vessel subject to this landing limit must be separated from other species of fish and stored so as to be readily available for inspection.

(2) *GB cod landing and maximum possession limits*. Unless otherwise restricted under § 648.85, a vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS permit, including a vessel issued a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions, may land up to 2,000 lb (907.2 kg) of cod per DAS, or part of a DAS, up to 20,000 lb (9,072 kg) provided it complies with the requirements specified in paragraph (b)(4) of this section and this paragraph (b)(2). Cod on board a vessel subject to this landing limit must be separated from other species of fish and stored so as to be readily available for inspection.

(3) [Reserved]

(4) *Exemption*. A common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS is exempt from the landing limit described in paragraph (b)(1) of this section when fishing south of the GOM Regulated Mesh Area, defined in § 648.80(a)(1), provided that it complies with the requirement of this paragraph (b)(4).

(i) *Declaration*. With the exception of a vessel declared into the U.S./Canada Management Area, as described in § 648.85(a)(3)(ii), a common pool vessel that fishes or intends to fish under a NE multispecies DAS south of the line described in paragraph (b)(4) of this section, under the cod trip limits described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, must, prior to leaving port, declare its intention to do so through the VMS, in accordance with instructions to be provided by the Regional Administrator. In lieu of a VMS declaration, the Regional Administrator may authorize such vessels to obtain a letter of authorization. If a letter of authorization is required, such vessel may not fish north of the exemption area for a minimum of 7 consecutive days (when fishing under the multispecies DAS program), and must carry the letter of authorization on board.

(ii) A common pool vessel exempt from the GOM cod landing limit pursuant to paragraph (b)(4)(i) of this section may not fish north of the line specified

in paragraph (b)(4) of this section for the duration of the trip, but may transit the GOM Regulated Mesh Area, provided that its gear is stowed in accordance with the provisions of § 648.23(b). A vessel fishing north and south of the line on the same trip is subject to the most restrictive applicable cod trip limit.

(c) *Atlantic halibut*. A vessel issued a NE multispecies permit under § 648.4(a)(1) may land or possess on board no more than one Atlantic halibut per trip, provided the vessel complies with other applicable provisions of this part.

(d) *Small-mesh multispecies*. (1) Vessels issued a valid Federal NE multispecies permit specified under § 648.4(a)(1) are subject to the following possession limits for small-mesh multispecies, which are based on the mesh size used by, or on board vessels fishing for, in possession of, or landing small-mesh multispecies.

(i) *Vessels possessing on board or using nets of mesh size smaller than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm)*. Owners or operators of a vessel may possess and land not more than 3,500 lb (1,588 kg) of combined silver hake and offshore hake if either of the following conditions apply:

(A) The mesh size of any net or any part of a net used by or on board the vessel is smaller than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm), as applied to the part of the net specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iv) of this section, as measured in accordance with § 648.80(f); or

(B) The mesh size of any net or part of a net on board the vessel not incorporated into a fully constructed net is smaller than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm), as measured by methods specified in § 648.80(f). “Incorporated into a fully constructed net” means that any mesh smaller than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) that is incorporated into a fully constructed net may occur only in the part of the net not subject to the mesh size restrictions specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iv) of this section, and the net into which the mesh is incorporated must be available for immediate use.

(ii) *Vessels possessing on board or using nets of mesh size equal to or greater than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) but less than 3 inches (7.62 cm)*. Owners or operators of a vessel that is not subject to the possession

limit specified in paragraph (d)(1)(i) of this section may possess and land not more than 7,500 lb (3,402 kg) of combined silver hake and offshore hake if either of the following conditions apply:

(A) The mesh size of any net or any part of a net used by or on board the vessel is equal to or greater than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) but smaller than 3 inches (7.62 cm), as applied to the part of the net specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iv) of this section, as measured by methods specified in § 648.80(f); or

(B) The mesh size of any net or part of a net on board the vessel not incorporated into a fully constructed net is equal to or greater than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) but smaller than 3 inches (7.62 cm), as measured by methods specified in § 648.80(f). “Incorporated into a fully constructed net” means that any mesh smaller than 2.5 inches (6.35 cm) that is incorporated into a fully constructed net may occur only in the part of the net not subject to the mesh size restrictions as specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iv) of this section, and the net into which the mesh is incorporated must be available for immediate use.

(iii) *Vessels possessing on board or using nets of mesh size equal to or greater than 3 inches (7.62 cm)*. An owner or operator of a vessel that is not subject to the possession limits specified in paragraphs (d)(1)(i) and (ii) of this section may possess and land not more than 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) of combined silver hake and offshore hake if both of the following conditions apply:

(A) The mesh size of any net or any part of a net used by or on board the vessel is equal to or greater than 3 inches (7.62 cm), as applied to the part of the net specified in paragraph (d)(1)(iv) of this section, as measured by methods specified in § 648.80(f); and

(B) The mesh size of any net or part of a net on board the vessel not incorporated into a fully constructed net is equal to or greater than 3 inches (7.62 cm), as measured by methods specified in § 648.80(f). “Incorporated into a fully constructed net” means that any mesh smaller than 3 inches (7.62 cm) that is incorporated into a fully constructed net may occur only in the part of the net not subject to the mesh size restrictions as specified in paragraph

(d)(1)(iv) of this section, and the net into which the mesh is incorporated must be available for immediate use.

(iv) *Application of mesh size.* Counting from the terminus of the net, the mesh size restrictions specified in paragraphs (d)(1)(i) through (iii) of this section are only applicable to the first 100 meshes (200 bars in the case of square mesh) for vessels greater than 60 ft (18.3 m) in length, and to the first 50 meshes (100 bars in the case of square mesh) for vessels 60 ft (18.3 m) or less in length. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, the restrictions and conditions pertaining to mesh size do not apply to nets or pieces of net smaller than 3 ft by 3 ft (0.9 m by 0.9 m), (9 sq ft (0.81 sq m)).

(2) *Possession limit for vessels participating in the northern shrimp fishery.* Owners and operators of vessels participating in the Small-Mesh Northern Shrimp Fishery Exemption Area, as described in § 648.80(a)(3), with a vessel issued a valid Federal NE multispecies permit specified under § 648.4(a)(1), may possess and land silver hake and offshore hake, combined, up to an amount equal to the weight of shrimp on board, not to exceed 3,500 lb (1,588 kg). Silver hake and offshore hake on board a vessel subject to this possession limit must be separated from other species of fish and stored so as to be readily available for inspection.

(3) *Possession restriction for vessels electing to transfer small-mesh NE multispecies at sea.* Owners and operators of vessels issued a valid Federal NE multispecies permit and issued a letter of authorization to transfer small-mesh NE multispecies at sea according to the provisions specified in § 648.13(b) are subject to a combined silver hake and offshore hake possession limit that is 500 lb (226.8 kg) less than the possession limit the vessel otherwise receives. This deduction shall be noted on the transferring vessel's letter of authorization from the Regional Administrator.

(e) *White hake.* Unless otherwise restricted under this part, a common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish

Category C or D permit provisions is not restricted in the amount of white hake the vessel may land per trip during fishing years 2010 and 2011. Starting in fishing year 2012, unless otherwise restricted under this part, a common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions may land up to 500 lb (226.8 kg) of white hake per DAS, or any part of a DAS, up to 2,000 lb (907.2 kg) per trip.

(f) *Calculation of weight of fillets or parts of fish.* The possession limits described under this part are based on the weight of whole, whole-gutted, or gilled fish. For purposes of determining compliance with the possession limits specified in paragraphs (a), (b), or (c) of this section, the weight of fillets and parts of fish, other than whole-gutted or gilled fish, as allowed under § 648.83(a) and (b), will be multiplied by 3.

(g) *Yellowtail flounder—(1) CC/GOM and SNE/MA yellowtail flounder landing limit.* Unless otherwise restricted under this part, a common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions, and fishing exclusively outside of the U.S./Canada Management Area, as defined in § 648.85(a)(1), may land or possess on board up to 250 lb (113.6 kg) of yellowtail flounder per DAS, or any part of a DAS, up to a maximum possession limit of 1,500 lb (680.4 kg) per trip. A vessel fishing outside and inside of the U.S./Canada Management Area on the same trip is subject to the more restrictive yellowtail flounder trip limit (i.e., that specified by this paragraph (g) or § 648.85(a)(3)(iv)(C)).

(2) *GB yellowtail flounder landing limit.* Unless otherwise restricted under this part, a common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions, and fishing in

the U.S./Canada Management Area defined in § 648.85(a)(1) is subject to the GB yellowtail flounder limit described in paragraph § 648.85(a)(3)(iv)(c).

(h) *Other possession restrictions.* Vessels are subject to any other applicable possession limit restrictions of this part.

(i) *Offloading requirement for vessels possessing species regulated by a daily possession limit.* A vessel that has ended a trip as specified in § 648.10(e)(2)(iii) or (h)(5) that possesses on board species regulated by a daily possession limit (*i.e.*, pounds per DAS), as specified at § 648.85 or § 648.86, must offload species in excess of the daily landing limit prior to leaving port on a subsequent trip. A vessel may retain on board up to one day's worth of such species prior to the start of a subsequent trip. Other species regulated by an overall trip limit may be retained on board for a subsequent trip. For example, a vessel that possesses cod and winter flounder harvested from Georges Bank is subject to a daily possession limit for cod of 1,000 lb (453 kg)/DAS and an overall trip limit of 5,000 lb (2,267 kg)/trip for winter flounder. In this example, the vessel would be required to offload any cod harvested in excess of 1,000 lb (453 kg) (*i.e.*, the vessel may retain up to 1,000 lb (453 kg) of Georges Bank cod, but must offload any additional cod), but may retain on board winter flounder up to the maximum trip limit prior to leaving port and crossing the VMS Demarcation Line to begin a subsequent trip.

(j) *GB winter flounder.* Unless otherwise restricted under this part, a common pool vessel fishing under a NE multispecies DAS, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions and fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area defined in § 648.85(a)(1) is not restricted in the amount of GB winter flounder the vessel may land per trip.

(k) *Other regulated NE multispecies possession restrictions for some Atlantic herring vessels.* A vessel issued an All Areas Limited Access Herring Permit and/or an Areas 2 and 3 Limited Access Herring Permit on a declared herring trip, regardless of area fished or gear

used, or a vessel issued a Limited Access Incidental Catch Herring Permit and/or an Open Access Herring Permit and fishing with midwater trawl gear pursuant to § 648.80(d), may possess and land haddock, and up to 100 lb (45 kg), combined, of other regulated NE multispecies, other than haddock, in accordance with the requirements in § 648.80(d) and (e). Such fish may not be sold for human consumption.

(l) *Ocean pout, windowpane flounder, SNE/MA winter flounder, and Atlantic wolffish.* A vessel issued a limited access NE multispecies permit, an open access NE multispecies Handgear B permit, or a limited access monkfish permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions may not fish for, possess, or land ocean pout, windowpane flounder, or Atlantic wolffish. In addition, such vessels may not fish for, possess, or land winter flounder caught in or from the SNE/MA winter flounder stock area, as defined in § 648.85(b)(6)(v)(F). Vessels may transit this area with GOM or GB winter flounder on board the vessel, provided that gear is stowed in accordance with the provisions of § 648.23(b).

(m) *Additional possession restrictions—*
(1) *Daily landing restriction.* A vessel issued a limited access NE multispecies permit, an open access NE multispecies Handgear B permit, or a limited access monkfish permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions may only land regulated species or ocean pout once in any 24-hr period, based upon the time the vessel lands following the end of the previous trip. For example, if a vessel lands 1,600 lb (725.7 kg) of GOM cod at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, that vessel cannot land any more regulated species or ocean pout until at least 6 p.m. on the following Wednesday.

(2) *Possession limits for vessels fishing in multiple areas.* If a vessel fishes in more than one stock area on the same trip, as defined in § 648.85(b)(6)(v) or § 648.87(b)(1)(ii), the most restrictive trip limit for a species applies for the entire trip.

(n) *Pollock.* Unless otherwise restricted under this part, a vessel issued a NE multispecies DAS permit, a limited access Handgear A permit, an open access Handgear B permit, or a

monkfish limited access permit and fishing under the monkfish Category C or D permit provisions, may not possess or land more than 1,000 lb (450 kg) of pollock for each DAS or part of a DAS fished, up to 10,000 lb (4,500 kg) per trip.

(o) *Regional Administrator authority to implement possession limits*—(1) *Possession restrictions to prevent exceeding common pool sub-ACLs.* If the Regional Administrator projects that the catch of any NE multispecies stock allocated to common pool vessels pursuant to § 648.90(a)(4) will exceed the pertinent sub-ACL, NMFS may implement or adjust, at any time prior to or during the fishing year, in a manner consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act, a per-DAS possession limit and/or a maximum trip limit in order to prevent exceeding the common pool sub-ACL in that fishing year.

(2) *Possession restrictions to facilitate harvest of sub-ACLs allocated to the common pool.* If the Regional Administrator projects that the sub-ACL of any stock allocated to the common pool pursuant to § 648.90(a)(4) will not be caught during the fishing year, the Regional Administrator may remove or adjust, in a manner consistent with the Administrative Procedure Act, a per-DAS possession limit and/or a maximum trip limit in order to facilitate harvest and enable the total catch to approach, but not exceed, the pertinent sub-ACL allocated to the common pool for that fishing year.

[69 FR 22978, Apr. 27, 2004, as amended at 70 FR 76428, Dec. 27, 2005; 71 FR 46876, Aug. 15, 2006; 71 FR 62193, Oct. 23, 2006; 72 FR 11277, Mar. 12, 2007; 72 FR 73280, Dec. 27, 2007; 74 FR 20556, May 4, 2009; 75 FR 18337, 18373, Apr. 9, 2010; 76 FR 42586, July 19, 2011; 76 FR 56998, Sept. 15, 2011]

§ 648.87 Sector allocation.

(a) *Procedure for approving/implementing a sector allocation proposal.* (1) Any person may submit a sector allocation proposal for a group of limited access NE multispecies vessels to the Council and request that the sector be implemented through either a biennial adjustment or framework adjustment, as specified in § 648.90(a)(2), as long as it is submitted at least 1 year prior to the date the sector wants to begin oper-

ations in accordance with the conditions and restrictions of this section. The sector allocation proposal must contain an appropriate analysis that assesses the impact of the proposed sector, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

(2) Upon receipt of a sector allocation proposal, the Council must decide whether to initiate a management action to implement the sector proposal. Should a biennial adjustment or framework adjustment to authorize a sector allocation proposal be initiated, the Council will follow the framework adjustment provisions of § 648.90(a)(2). Any biennial adjustment or framework adjustment developed to implement a sector allocation proposal must be in compliance with the general requirements specified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section.

(3) *Eligibility.* Any valid limited access NE multispecies permit, including a Handgear A permit and those permits held in confirmation of permit history pursuant to § 648.4(a)(1)(i)(J) as of May 1, 2008, is eligible to join a NE multispecies sector, provided the permit complies with the restrictions specified in this section. Any valid limited access Category A or B monkfish permit may be eligible to join a NE multispecies sector, as described in this section, pursuant to any measures adopted by a future revision to the Monkfish FMP by both the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. Vessels that do not join a sector remain subject to the NE multispecies regulations for common pool vessels.

(4) *Minimum size.* To be authorized to operate as a sector under this section, a sector must be comprised of at least three NE multispecies permits issued to at least three different persons, none of whom have any common ownership interests in the permits, vessels, or businesses associated with the permits issued the other two or more persons in that sector. Having an ownership interest in a permit includes, but is not limited to, persons or entities who are shareholders, officers, or partners in a corporation owning a permit; who are partners (general or limited) to a permit owner; who, in any way, partly own a permit; or who derive any financial benefit, or exercises any control